

## A Note on the GPO/WEP-

Since when in this country does a man get denied the government benefits that are awarded most all other citizens who have the same basic employment history?

My husband and I are teachers in Rhode Island. Like many others, we have worked more than two jobs, and planned for our children's educations. We are outraged that our government will not pay us our social security benefit. We have paid \$500-600 per month for this benefit--money that we missed and had to sacrifice throughout our lives because my husband's take home pay was greatly reduced by this social security tax deduction. Now, after 31 years of teaching, we are in a position to retire. Our children are not yet in college. I am absolutely **disjointed by the discovery that if my husband predeceases me, I will not get the social security benefit that he has earned** (I only paid SS with my second job, I do have 40 quarters--YES, ten difficult years in a second job, but my benefit is wiped out completely by my pension offset (GPO). So, it seems that my government is taking away my benefit twice. Why did we bother to pay into this system? We planned on offsetting the drain of our children's college tuition expenses in the future by having our social security checks kick in at the conclusion of their educations. Why **did my government not tell me of this** over this past decade? My social security statement reassured me of the amount we were to receive with no mention of a WEP or GPO. Of course our "life plan" included the social security funding source, as do most Americans who pay social security taxes in good faith.

**We cannot live our lives again.** I feel trapped. We are too old. There *is* no time to make adjustments. We worked hard, took on a second job, raised our children, saved our money, and have a plan. How can my government let me down? Since when in this country does a man get denied the government benefits that are awarded most all other citizens who have the same employment profile?

The government is not deducting the pensions of most state workers from their social security payment (I believe the misguided **WEP and GPO apply in only 15 states which is at the very core of my outrage!**). Additionally, my friends who have private pensions are not impacted; they get both a pension and a social security check. We worked harder and longer than most. Of course we expect the benefit for which we've made so many sacrifices.

Please tell our story. All we want is an equitable government policy. Let *all* Americans share the burden of tax shortfalls, including ourselves. Do not allow our government to target any single group in such a covert fashion (remember our social security statements *still* state that we are to get a specific amount without mention of the obscure WEP/GPO). Who am I to believe?

Thank you,  
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